

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 7017

EO 11652: XGDS-4  
TAGS: PINT, KS  
SUBJECT: COALITION LEADERSHIP TO BE ELECTED AT SEPTEMBER  
NDP CONVENTION

REF: SEOUL 5983

SUMMARY. NDP MAINSTREAM AND NON-MAINSTREAM HAVE ANNOUNCED  
AGREEMENT TO HOLD NATIONAL CONVENTION SEPTEMBER 15 AT WHICH  
SEPARATE ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD FOR "SUPREME COMMITTEE"  
LEADERSHIP OF SIX OR SEVEN AND FOR SENIOR SUPREME COMMITTEE  
MEMBER. DESPITE PAPERING OVER DIFFERENCES, PRO-KIM YONG-  
SAM AND ANTI-KIM FORCES LIKELY TO CONTINUE SQUABBLING.  
END SUMMARY

1. NEW COALITION SCHEME: NDP'S MAINSTREAM AND NON-MAINSTREAM  
HAS FINALLY SUCCEEDED IN REACHING AGREEMENT TO HOLD NATIONAL  
CONVENTION AT WHICH NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP WILL BE ELECTED.  
CONVENTION, TO BE HELD IN SEOUL SEPTEMBER 15, JUST BEFORE  
SEPTEMBER 20 OPENING OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WILL ELECT  
SIX OR SEVEN-MAN SUPREME COMMITTEE HEADED BY SEPARATELY  
ELECTED SENIOR SUPREME COMMITTEE MEMBER. ACCORDING  
PRESS REPORTS MAINSTREAM GROUP AND VARIOUS SUBFACTIONS  
AMONG NON-MAINSTREAM NOW BUSILY RECRUITING CONVENTION  
SUPPORTERS.

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2. ACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTION, CONSTRUCTED BY SEVERAL YOUNGER NEUTRALS IN THE PARTY AND THEN SOLD TO FACTION LEADERS, REPRESENT RATHER BYZANTINE AND PURPOSEFULLY VAGUE COMPROMISE. EACH CONVENTION-GOER WILL BE ALLOWED TO VOTE FOR ONE MAN FOR SUPREME COMMITTEE AND TOP SIX VOTE-GETTERS WILL BE DECLARED WINNERS; THEN SEPARATE ELECTION FOR SENIOR SUPREME COMMITTEE MEMBER WILL BE HELD. POSSIBLE VARIATION IN COMMITTEE SIZE OF SIX OR SEVEN COMES ABOUT BECAUSE OF SEPARATE ELECTION OF SENIOR COMMITTEEMAN WHO MAY BE CHOSEN EITHER FROM ALREADY ELECTED GROUP OF SIX REGULAR COMMITTEEMEN OR FROM OUTSIDE THIS GROUP. IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT, IN THE EVENT, KIM YONG-SAM, WHO EXPECTED TO WIN TOP SLOT, WILL NOT RUN IN REGULAR COMMITTEE ELECTION, BUT ONLY FOR TOP JOB; THUS COMMITTEE WILL END UP WITH SEVEN MEMBERS AND, MOST LIKELY, A MAINSTREAM MAJORITY.

3. AMBIGUITY IN ARRANGEMENTS APPARENTLY SUFFICIENT SO THAT NEITHER MAIN FACTION COULD REJECT SCHEME BECAUSE OF PERCEIVED UNDUE ADVANTAGE FOR THE OTHER. WHILE KIM YONG-SAM AND MAINSTREAMERS LIKELY TO GET TOP JOB AND MAJORITY OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS, NON-MAINSTREAMERS HAVE SECURED BASIC PRINCIPLE OF COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP, AND SINCE SENIOR COMMITTEEMAN WILL NOT HAVE SUBSTANTIAL INDEPENDENT POWER UNDER NEW ARRANGEMENTS, NON-MAINSTREAM WILL HAVE TO BE HEARD IN FUTURE. KIM OK-SON, WHO RESIGNED FROM HER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SEAT LAST YEAR FOLLOWING HER ASSEMBLY FLOOR ATTACK ON PRESIDENT PAK, TOLD EMBOFF THAT MAINSTREAM PROBABLY CAME OFF SLIGHTLY AHEAD ON OVERALL AGREEMENT, CITING AS REASONS PROVISIONS TO PROHIBIT CONVENTION DEBATE OF KIM YONG-SAM'S PAST ACTIVITIES AND ELECT SEVEN RULING COMMITTEE MEMBERS BY DIRECT VOTE ON FLOOR, BOTH ISSUES WHICH NON-MAINSTREAM HAD OPPOSED. FACT IS, HOWEVER, MAINSTREAM VICTORY ON THESE POINTS IS NOT SURPRISING, SINCE IT HAS MAJORITY OF PARTY SUPPORTERS.

3. NON-MAINSTREAMERS WHO WILL RUN FOR SENIOR COMMITTEE POSTS REPORTEDLY INCLUDE ALL THE SUBFACTIONAL LEADERS: FORMER VICE SPEAKER YI CHOL-SUNG, PLUS KIM WON-MAN, KO HUNG-MUN, CHONG HAE-YONG AND SIN TO-HWAN. OTHER CONFIDENTIAL

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NON-MAINSTREAMERS IN CONTENTION FOR LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE ARE FORMER GENERAL KIM HYONG-IL AND MAVERICK KIM OK-SON. FROM MAINSTREAM, ACTING PARTY PRESIDENT YI CHUNG-HWAN AND VICE SPEAKER YI MIN-U ARE SAID TO BE LOBBYING FOR SEATS. PLETHORA OF NON-MAINSTREAM CANDIDATES SHOW NOT ONLY COMPETITIVE SPIRIT BUT CONTINUED DIVISIVENESS AMONG THEMSELVES.

4. UNTIL LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE ELECTIONS, PARTY WILL CONTINUE TO BE RUN PROVISIONALLY BY AD HOC COALITION COMMITTEE OF TEN WHICH NOW INVOLVED IN CONVENTION PREPARATIONS. THIS COMMITTEE HAS BEEN EMPOWERED NOT ONLY TO SELECT CONVENTION DELEGATES AND TO MODIFY PARTY CONSTITUTION TO REFLECT AGREED UPON CHANGES, BUT ALSO TO LEGALIZE NEW LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE INNOVATION.

5. OUTLOOK: ONE OF MORE SIGNIFICANT LONG-TERM PROVISIONS IN AGREEMENT IS STIPULATION THAT NEXT PARTY ELECTION (FOLLOWING CURRENT ONE SCHEDULED FOR MID-SEPTEMBER) WILL BE HELD AFTER, NOT BEFORE, GENERAL ELECTION OF 10TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN 1979. THUS NEW COALITION LEADERSHIP WILL NOT ONLY GOVERN SELECTION OF POSSIBLE NDP CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT IN 1978 (SHOULD ANYONE DECIDE TO RUN) BUT ALSO THOSE RUNNING FOR NDP SEATS IN 1979 AS WELL AS 1979 CONVENTION DELEGATES.

6. EVEN WITH AGREEMENT ON COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP ELECTION PROCEDURES, PROSPECT IS STILL NOT ALL THAT BRIGHT FOR OPPOSITION. FOR A START, SOME KNOTTY PARLIAMENTARY DETAILS REMAIN TO BE SOLVED BEFORE CONVENTION CONVENES. EVEN ASSUMING CONVENTION OPENS, IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER SELF-SEEKING NDP LEADERS, POSSIBLY FUNDED BY ROKG, CAN ACTUALLY GET THROUGH THE PROCEEDINGS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES LAID DOWN. MS. KIM OK-SON CLAIMS THAT GOVERNMENT DOES NOT LIKE THESE SIGNS OF PARTY REUNIFICATION. KIM YONG-SAM, SHE ALLEGES, IS STILL COUNTING ON PRESIDENT PAK FOR FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT; SHE CLAIMS THAT NDP ASSEMBLYMAN KIM SU-HAN HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH CHA CHI-CHOL, DIRECTOR OF PRESIDENTIAL PROTECTIVE FORCE. OH SE-EUNG, WHO CLAIMS TO BE MIDDLE-OF-THE -ROAD CHIEF ARCHITECT OF COMPROMISE AND HAS OBVIOUS VESTED INTEREST IN NEW COALITION PLAN, CLAIMS GOVERNMENT HAS IN FACT NOT YET SHOWN ITS HAND, AND HE IS CONFIDENTIAL

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HOPEFUL ROKG WILL HOLD OFF ON GROUNDS IT HAS LONG-TERM INTEREST IN KEEPING VIABLE OPPOSITION PARTY ALIVE.

7. WHATEVER IMMEDIATE OUTCOME OF CONVENTION WE HARDLY EXPECT MUCH REAL CHANGE IN THE NDP'S FORTUNES. AS ALWAYS, DENIED AN EFFECTIVE ROLE BY THE GOVERNMENT AND WITH LITTLE INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL MEANS, OPPOSITION WILL CONTINUE TO CONCENTRATE ITS ENERGIES ON IN-FIGHTING (ONE HAS TO KEEP AMUSED). ASSUMING IT ACTUALLY GETS GOING, NEW COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP SYSTEM MAY PROVIDE A NEW, MORE PRESENTABLE FORUM FOR THIS IN-FIGHTING AND MAY EVEN CONTAIN IT TO A DEGREE. NO ONE, HOWEVER, ANTICIPATES THAT UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES SUPREME COMMITTEE WILL PROVIDE LEADERSHIP TO END NDP SQUABBLING, TO SOLVE PARTY'S MORE ENDEMIC PROBLEMS, OR TO FASHION MORE USEFUL

OPPOSITION ROLE.

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